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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/963,911	09/26/2001	Edward J. Tromczynski	6882-5	9437

21324 7590 06/02/2004

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EXAMINER

COLON, CATHERINE M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/963,911

Applicant(s)

TROMCZYNSKI ET AL.

Examiner

C. Michelle Colon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 September 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. The following is a Non-Final Office Action in response to the communication received on September 26, 2001. Claims 1-49 are now pending in this application.

#### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

2. The Examiner has reviewed the patents supplied in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) provided on March 4, 2002.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

4. Claims 1-11, 14-21, 23-30, 33-38 and 43-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by AllMeetings.com. The following sources, which explain the different aspects of AllMeetings.com, are considered as describing one reference:

- i. Article "b-there.com and All Meetings.com Partnership Revolutionizes Meeting Planning Process" from PR Newswire (referred to herein as reference A); and
- ii. Archived version of www.AllMeetings.com retrieved from www.Archive.org (referred to herein as reference B).

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As per claims 1, 15 and 24, www.AllMeetings.com discloses a computer system for use in managing the planning of meetings, method for managing the planning of meetings and computer program product, comprising:

at least one input device (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 1-4 and 10; The system discloses a web-based interface that allows users to input and retrieve various event planning data.);

at least one display (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 1-4; The system is accessed through a web-based interface.);

at least one processor (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 1-4; The system is a web-based application that utilizes databases; thus processors are inherent to the system.);

means for receiving meeting identification data from a planner through said input device (reference B, pages 1 and 8; A user enters meeting start date, length, airport and attendees to identify a meeting. If users have sent RFPs, then meetings are identified that way as well.);

means for receiving meeting scheduling data (reference B, page 1; Meeting scheduling data such as start date, length, airport and attendees is received by the web-based interface.);

means for receiving resource data for resources required for a meeting (reference B, pages 14, 17-19, 21-27; The system allows users to create checklists that include resource requirements for a meeting.);

means for generating a request for proposal to send to a supplier of said resource, means for receiving proposal data from said supplier, and means for tracking said request for proposals and said proposal data from said supplier (reference B, pages 2, 6 and 8);

means for creating a budget for said meeting (reference B, pages 2, 7 and 8);

means for receiving financial data for said meeting (reference B, pages 2, 7 and 8);

means for receiving registration data for said meeting (reference B, pages 20 and 21);

means for storing data, said data comprising at least one member of the group consisting of meeting identification data, meeting scheduling data, resource data, request for proposal, proposal data, budget, and registration data (reference A, page 1; The system uses a budget database to store budget data.); and

means for generating a report based on said stored data (reference A, page 1; The system uses stored historical data to compare budgets and spending from year to year.).

As per claim 2, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 1 wherein said means for receiving registration data is coupled to said input device, and wherein said registration data is entered into a registration unit through said input device (reference B, page 20).

As per claim 3, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 2 further comprising a link to a global informational network (reference B, pages 1 and 2;

The system provides users with global access searching myriad facilities for availability and pricing.).

As per claim 4, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 3 wherein said means for receiving registration data comprises an input device coupled to said link to said global informational network (reference B, page 20; The system receives registration data via the website.).

As per claim 5, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a link to a global informational network (reference B, pages 1 and 2; The system provides users with global access searching myriad facilities for availability and pricing).

As per claim 6, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 1 wherein said financial data comprises at least one member of the group consisting of forecasted costs, actual costs, forecasted income, actual income, budgeted costs, budgeted income, costs and income (reference B, pages 2, 7 and 8).

As per claim 7, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

a database containing information about suppliers for said meeting and means for searching said database (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 1, 2 and 10; The system allows users to search a database of hotels.).

As per claim 8, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 1 further comprising means for consolidating said stored data from two or more meetings

(reference A, page 1; The system stores consolidated budget data to compare spending from year to year.).

As per claim 9, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 8 wherein said means for generating a report based on said stored data generates at least one report containing said consolidated data (reference A, page 1; The system generates reports on the consolidated budget data to conduct budget and spending analysis.).

As per claim 10, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1 wherein said means for generating a report based on said stored data generates at least one report containing financial data categorized according to one or more of the following supplier categories: food and beverage, meeting room rental, guest room rental, audio-visual equipment rental, printing, advertising, air travel, car rental, insurance, and staffing (reference A, page 1; reference B, page 7).

As per claim 11, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 10 wherein said financial data comprises meeting spending data for an organization (reference A, page 1; reference B, page 7).

As per claim 14, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1 further comprising: a means for searching said stored data (reference B, pages 1 and 2).

As per claim 16, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the method as recited in claim 15 wherein said financial data comprises at least one member of the group consisting

of: actual costs, forecasted costs, forecasted income, actual income, budgeted costs, budgeted income, costs and income (reference B, pages 2, 7 and 8).

As per claim 17, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15 further comprising: generating a report summarizing selected data related to said meeting, said data selected from the group consisting of meeting history, total meeting costs, total meeting income, meeting costs by category, meeting income by category, meeting costs by supplier, total actual meeting costs, total actual meeting income, actual meeting income by category, attendance, schedule of events, destination costs, and destination income (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 7 and 14-27).

As per claim 18, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15 wherein said scheduling data comprises at least one member of the group consisting of meeting dates, event dates, meeting time of day, and event time of day (reference B, page 1; Meeting scheduling data such as start date, length, airport and attendees is received by the web-based interface.).

As per claim 19, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15 wherein said budget data comprises at least one member of the group consisting of forecasted costs, actual costs, forecasted income and actual income (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 2, 7 and 8).

As per claim 20, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15 further comprising: generating a report containing financial data arranged into one or more categories selected from the group consisting of food and beverage, meeting room rental, guest room rental, audio-visual equipment, equipment rental, printing,



advertising, air travel, car rental, insurance, and staffing (reference B, pages 14-27);  
and

comparing said financial data to said budget (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 21, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 20 wherein said financial data comprises meeting spending data for an organization (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 23, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15 further comprising:

consolidating all stored data (reference A, page 1; The system stores consolidated budget data to compare spending from year to year.).

As per claim 25, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the computer program product as recited in claim 24 further comprising: a computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to generate a report containing a set of dynamic meeting data selected from the group consisting of: meeting history, total meeting costs, total meeting income, meeting costs by category, meeting income by category, meeting costs by supplier, total actual meeting costs, total actual meeting income, actual meeting income by category, attendance, schedule of events, destination costs, and destination income (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 7 and 14-27).

As per claim 26, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the computer program product as recited in claim 24 further comprising: a computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to produce consolidated data from said stored data from two or

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more said meetings (reference A, page 1; The system stores consolidated budget data to compare spending from year to year.).

As per claim 27, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the computer program product as recited in claim 26 further comprising: a computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to generate at least one report containing said consolidated data (reference A, page 1; The system generates reports on the consolidated budget data to conduct budget and spending analysis.).

As per claim 28, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the computer program product as recited in claim 24 further comprising: a computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to generate at least one report containing financial data categorized according to one or more of the following supplier categories: food and beverage, meeting room rental, guest room rental, audio-visual equipment rental, printing, advertising, air travel, car rental, insurance, and staffing (reference A, page 1; reference B, page 7).

As per claim 29, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the computer program product as recited in claim 24 further comprising: a computer readable program code configured to cause a computer to connect to at least one remote computer (reference B, pages 15-27; The system sends email reminders to users about various aspects of the meeting planning, thus the system connects to users' computers.).

As per claim 30, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

means for sharing said stored data with a plurality of planners (reference B, pages 1 and 2; Multiple planners have access to the hotels database.).

As per claim 33, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 30, further comprising:

means for receiving distressed inventory data, and means for notifying said plurality of meeting planners of said distressed inventory data (reference B, pages 23-26; The system allows planners to maintain various information on inventory data such as equipment and supplies.).

As per claim 34, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

means for providing attendee services (reference B, pages 17-19, 21 and 22; The system allows planners to indicate certain service requirements for attendees.).

As per claim 35, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

means for searching for suitable venues for a meeting (reference B, pages 1 and 2).

As per claim 36, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

means for displaying internal meeting space (reference B, pages 1 and 2; The system allows users to view hotels based on various search criteria.).

As per claim 37, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

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means for tracking expenses by a vendor, and means for comparing forecasted expenditures to budgeted expenditures (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 38, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the system as recited in claim 37, further comprising:

means for reconciling expenditures (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 43, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 15, further comprising:

tracking expenses by vendor and comparing forecasted expenditures to budgeted expenditures (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 44, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 43, further comprising: reconciling expenditures (reference B, page 7).

As per claim 45, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 20, further comprising:

negotiating reduced pricing with one or more suppliers in one or more of said supplier categories based on said financial data, and negotiating for the provision of complimentary goods and services from one or more suppliers in one or more of said supplier categories based on said financial data with one or more suppliers in one or more of said supplier categories (reference B, pages 2-5; The system provides planners with options for reduced pricing for venues.).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 12, 13, 22, 31, 32, 39-42 and 46-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AllMeetings.com as applied above.

As per claims 12, 13 and 22, www.AllMeetings.com does not expressly disclose the system and method as recited in claims 1 and 15, wherein said meeting scheduling data comprises information regarding cancelled meetings. However, www.AllMeetings.com does disclose receiving various meeting scheduling data such as start date, length, airport and attendees is received by the web-based interface (reference B, page 1). It is old and well known in the art of meeting planning to cancel or reschedule a cancelled meeting in a system if the meeting was initially scheduled in the system in order to maintain accurate scheduling information. Thus, it would have been obvious for a meeting planning system to receive information regarding cancelled meetings because doing so provides users of the system with accurate meeting schedule information, thus making the system useful for users.

As per claims 31, 32, and 39-41, www.AllMeetings.com does not expressly disclose the system and method as recited in claims 30 and 15, further comprising:

means for generating a common calendar, and means for alerting said plurality of meeting planners to potential meeting conflicts; or sharing meeting scheduling data.

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However, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) does enable venues to respond to RFPs (reference B, pages 1, 2, 6 and 8). It is old and well known in the art of proposal generating that venues would respond to an RFP with their availability information, with the availability information indicating whether or not the venue already has a meeting scheduled.

Thus, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art for the system of [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) to generate a common calendar and alert planners of potential meeting conflicts because doing so would allow planners to request and review proposals effectively and aid in venues' proposal generating, thus further enhancing the planning service.

As per claim 42, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses the method as recited in claim 39, further comprising:

receiving distressed inventory data, and notifying said plurality of meeting planners of said distressed inventory data (reference B, pages 23-26; The system allows planners to maintain various information on inventory data such as equipment and supplies.).

As per claims 46 and 49, [www.AllMeetings.com](http://www.AllMeetings.com) discloses a new computer system for use in managing the planning of meetings for a plurality of meeting planners, the computer system comprising:

a shared database comprising meeting identification data and meeting scheduling data (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 6 and 7; The system uses a budget database to store meeting budget data. The system also stores RFPs and RFP requests, which contain meeting scheduling data.);

means for receiving meeting identification data from a plurality of meeting planners (reference B, pages 1 and 8; A user enters meeting start date, length, airport and attendees to identify a meeting. If users have sent RFPs, then meetings are identified that way as well.);

means for receiving meeting scheduling data from a plurality of meeting planners (reference B, page 1; Meeting scheduling data such as start date, length, airport and attendees is received by the web-based interface.); and

means for storing data in the shared database (reference A, page 1; reference B, pages 1, 2 and 10; The system stores information regarding hotels and their schedule availability.).

www.AllMeetings.com does not expressly disclose means for generating a common calendar containing meeting identification data and meeting scheduling data for a plurality of meetings, or means for alerting said plurality of meeting planners to potential meeting conflicts. However, www.AllMeetings.com does enable venues to respond to RFPs (reference B, pages 1, 2, 6 and 8). It is old and well known in the art of proposal generating that venues would respond to an RFP with their availability information, with the availability information indicating whether or not the venue already has a meeting scheduled. Thus, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art for the system of www.AllMeetings.com to generate a common calendar and alert planners of potential meeting conflicts because doing so would allow planners to request and review proposals effectively and aid in venues' proposal generating, thus further enhancing the planning service.

As per claim 47, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the computer system according to claim 46, further comprising:

means for receiving distressed inventory data, and means for notifying said plurality of meeting planners of said distressed inventory data (reference B, pages 23-26; The system allows planners to maintain various information on inventory data such as equipment and supplies.).

As per claim 48, www.AllMeetings.com discloses the computer system according to claim 46, further comprising:

means for receiving resource data for resources required for a meeting (reference B, pages 14-27; The system allows users to utilize checklists, where they enter data regarding various meeting requirements.);

means for generating a request for proposal to send to a supplier of the resource, means for receiving proposal data from the supplier, and means for tracking the request for proposals and the proposal data from the supplier (reference B, pages 2, 6 and 8);

### ***Conclusion***

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Bingham et al. (U.S. 6,324,517) discusses meeting site selection based on all-inclusive meeting cost;
- Barnard et al. (U.S. 6,684,191) discusses a system for assessing a procurement system;



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- Conway (U.S. 5,732,401) discusses an activity-based cost tracking system;
- Beckhardt et al. (U.S. 6,085,166) discusses electronic calendaring with group scheduling and asynchronous fan-out;
- "Meeting management software," *Business Travel News*, Sept 27, 1999 [retrieved from Proquest], discusses meeting management software;
- "Planning and managing meetings," *Business Travel News*, Apr 10, 2000 [retrieved from Proquest], discusses guidelines for planning meetings;
- Dimon, Anne. "Are you e-planning savvy? Meeting planning is becoming a virtual pleasure thanks to the Internet's global research capabilities," *Meetings & Incentive Travel*, June 2000 [retrieved from Proquest], discusses Internet-based planning; and
- "End-to-end travel management systems" Meeting management software," *Business Travel News*, Sept 25, 2000 [retrieved from Proquest], discusses meeting management software.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to C. Michelle Colon whose telephone number is 703-605-4251. The examiner can normally be reached Monday – Thursday from 8:30am to 5:30pm and every other Friday from 8:30am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz, can be reached at 703-305-9643.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

***Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks***

***Washington D.C. 20231***

or faxed to:

703-305-7687 [Official Communications; including After Final  
communications labeled "Box AF"]

703-746-7202 [For status inquiries, draft communication, labeled  
"Proposed" or "Draft"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 7<sup>th</sup> floor receptionist.

  
cmc

May 24, 2004

  
**TARIQ R. HAFIZ**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**  
**TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600**